

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.**

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the CT General Assembly:

Good afternoon. My name is Nayely Reyes. I am a member of Uniting for a Safe Inclusive Community - Manchester. I'm in favor of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

I am going to share with you the difficult experience of not having health insurance in CT and how necessary and important it is. I hope you can take a few minutes to read my testimony.

I am a mother of two beautiful children; one of them has special needs and requires a lot of care from me. In order to take care of him, I need to have the best possible physical and emotional health.

A few years ago, I had to undergo an emergency medical surgery for cysts in my gallbladder, because it could cause my death at only 23 years of age. Being a mother for the first time weighed very heavily in making this decision. I had to undergo this surgery as per the advice of a doctor who explained to me at the time that this would be the best thing to do, otherwise I ran the risk of dying. I feared a very high medical bill, but I had no other option; it was very necessary. Over time, this surgery has caused more problems with my health that have lead me to need regular medical attention.

In 2015, I got very sick again due to a breast infection called Mastitis that lasted for four years; I had to drain my breasts twice a week. After two years of suffering with this breast infection and taking the recommended antibiotics and prednisone, they finally had to operate on me. But in the process of healing, my other breast started to have the same problem of Mastitis. After two more years with this medical problem, they had to operate on me again. My recovery was very slow due to my poor immunity because of all the antibiotics, prednisone, and pain medication that I had already taken over the course of 4 years.

All these procedures cost me a lot of money, but getting sick was not something I chose. This just happened to me and I had to pay all these expenses. This could all have been avoided if I could have had medical insurance to help me pay these expenses. Sometimes my antibiotics alone would cost over 100 dollars, and the cost of medical appointments and other medication expenses were added to that. Today I stand before you telling of how I almost died, and today I have two children who need me and deserve to have a healthy mother.

I want to express my sincere thanks for taking the time to read my testimony. I hope that you who are reading my testimony can help us to have health insurance to ensure better health, not only for us, but for all the communities in need. Please support S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. We have the right to live a healthy life.

Thank you for your time and hard work. I have no doubt that you will help us!

Sincerely,

Nayely Reyes  
South Windsor, CT